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EDITORIAL COMMENT

THE TRAINING SCHOOL RECORD IN AFTER-YEARS

One of the definite results of state registration has been the keeping of much more careful records by training schools than had been the universal custom. There may be still some states or some schools that are careless in this regard but we know them to be in the minority, if such be the case.

Few young nurses realize that the record they make during the period of training is going to influence their entire professional life. When a graduate nurse changes from one field of work to another, in the references she is obliged to provide, she goes back to the school from which she graduated for endorsement, and although the superintendent under whom she trained may have died or been absent many long years, her record remains as evidence for or against her. The longer she is at work, the more frequently must these records be referred to; for state registration, for eligibility for enrollment in the Red Cross nursing service, for the benefit of a Robb scholarship, the endorsement of the school from which she graduated is absolutely essential. There is nothing that tells so greatly against a woman in after years as a doubtful record during her period of training, of moral delinquency, whether in regard to matters serious or trifling. Evidence of neglect of duty, of willful disregard of the rules of the hospital, even when not sufficiently serious to merit dismissal, stand out strongly against the woman when she endeavors to enter those fields of work that call conspicuously for truthfulness, reliability, self-control and that moral integrity which makes her a safe leader of younger women or a proper person to be placed in unusual circumstances without supervision.

Of course, on general principles, we would say that no woman should be retained in a training school who shows a lack of the char-

acteristics we have enumerated but, on the other hand, we are admitting to our hospitals women who have been but a short time out of school, who have not been subjected to rigid discipline, who have not passed the period of youthful exuberance which sometimes leads to thoughtless indiscretions and who do not appreciate in the beginning the seriousness and the responsibility of the work they have undertaken. They do not know the effect on their lives of an accumulation of petty evidence showing lapses in conduct or neglect of duty.

We know that many superintendents endeavor to impress these lessons upon their young pupils but it is a matter that should be constantly emphasized. An adequate record of a pupil's training requires something more than the filling out of blanks showing how many weeks she has served in the different departments of a hospital and whether her service has been good, bad or indifferent,—something of the personality of the woman, her habits, her attractiveness, her popularity with both patients and associates, her power to meet an emergency or to respond to a demand that calls for self denial. It is true that as years go on many women who show only average ability in the hospital develop under the conditions of their outside work into women of leadership, and ability which is only latent during training becomes conspicuous during advancing years; but on general principles, among all classes of people, this is the exception rather than the rule.

CAUTION IN SEEKING NEW FIELDS

The public has come to expect a nurse to be willing to respond to every kind of a call, whether at home or at a distance, whether in a public institution, a private house or in one of the different lines of public health work, without any regard to her own personal protection or welfare. We know of nurses having answered an advertisement and started across the country to accept a position without knowing in the least the circumstances under which they were to be placed, without stopping to investigate the moral status of the person or the board employing them, without knowing how they were to live, much less how they were to be fed. We hear of nurses arriving at distant places to be told that the position has been filled, without money enough on hand to pay their return expenses and perhaps being obliged to accept work under humiliating conditions in consequence, or to appeal to local associations or directories for help. We have been told that it is not an unusual thing for registrars of directories to give preference to nurses who had been stranded in some such way to the detriment of those regularly enrolled, because there seemed nothing between such a

floating population of nurses and actual starvation, all of which, it goes without saying, is unfair. Before accepting a position about which she knows nothing, a nurse should make some investigation about the standing of the place. We know there are many institutions, both private and public, which are so dominated by politics or managed by people of doubtful reputation that it is impossible for reputable nurses to work in them. With our present chain of nursing organizations in every part of the country, there is no point where a nurse cannot gain information in regard to the standing of public institutions. There are local and state nurses' associations whose officers can always get into touch with persons whose advice would be reliable.

The private nurse, before starting out to travel with a seriously sick patient, should be sure that the best kind of medical advice has been obtained and rather than attempt a journey with a patient likely to die on the way, she should insist on his being placed in a hospital. It is not only cruel to a very sick patient to subject him to the discomforts which cannot be avoided on a train, but it reflects on the intelligence of the nurse to have undertaken a journey under such questionable conditions. We are not referring to accidents or sudden illness which may develop en route, but to cases of really serious illness where a patient's desire to get home or a physician's desire to get the patient off his hands lead the nurse to undertake such hazardous trips against her judgment. While we recognize the duty of the nurse to respond to appeals for help, a certain amount of common sense should be exercised in judging a situation. The person who rushes blindly into any sort of work often finds herself in a position from which it is difficult to extricate herself with honor or, at least, with credit to her profession.

THE MOVEMENT FOR PREPAREDNESS

There is scarcely a town of any size in the whole of the United States which is not showing interest in a greater or less degree in the question of preparedness. The women are taking quite as prominent a place in the movement as the men and in all of this work nurses should be lined up on one side or the other, we hope in favor of making a reasonable provision for the protection of the country and especially for the proper equipment and care of our own people in case of war. The Red Cross is beginning the establishment of base hospitals in different sections of the country. Physicians and Red Cross nurses are being properly organized into columns, and equipment for such hospitals is being accumulated in such a manner that on three days' notice all could be put in operation.

Nurses should not be satisfied to simply express their willingness to serve. Enrolled Red Cross nurses are, by a ruling of the Red Cross at its last annual meeting, members of the American Red Cross by virtue of their enrollment; these should identify themselves with the local chapter in their community if there is one. Nurses who are not enrolled in the Nursing Service may join any Red Cross chapter as lay members and they should take their places as citizens, with or without the vote, in influencing public opinion and in serving on committees in aid of this movement. Like the young men of the country, it would be the younger members of our profession who would be called upon to make the greatest sacrifices. Therefore, we as a profession, have a right to know in detail what provision the public proposes to make for their best protection. In no other way can nurses be informed, except by taking part in the movement.

THE ISABEL HAMPTON ROBB FUND

From Miss Nutting we learn that as a result of the special campaign for funds, the treasurer reported on March 11th that \$4,144.50 had been received, bringing the total amount of the fund to date up to \$18,815.97. On the same day the chairman of the Committee received the large sum of \$5,000.00 as a personal contribution from Mrs. William Church Osborn, president of the Women's Board of Managers of Bellevue Training School. In the letter accompanying her generous gift, Mrs. Osborn says, "This is such a splendid thing to establish and such a fitting memorial, that I wish I could double the amount." This brings our fund up to nearly \$24,000, and with the outstanding contributions that are still coming in it seems very likely that we shall reach the sum of \$25,000 before the present campaign is finished.

The treasurer comments on the very wide-spread interest aroused, in the completion of the Fund, as shown, not only in the comparatively large gifts of \$100 or \$200 from alumnae associations or individuals but in the small sums of \$3 to \$5 from individual nurses working in remote quarters of the country,—\$25 from a nurse in Canada, and \$44.50 from a group of doctors and nurses in far Oklahoma.

While the sum hoped for has not yet been reached, the result of the campaign has been inspiring in the evidences which it has given of renewed interest in our cherished educational Fund, and renewed assurances of the loyalty of nurses to higher educational ideals in work.

The Committee will not rest until the Fund is completed and the amount agreed upon secured, and it will shortly try to devise new plans by which to accomplish the work it has undertaken.

Since the writing of these paragraphs, the treasurer has reported further gifts amounting to \$1118.

PLANS FOR REORGANIZATION OF THE AMERICAN NURSES' ASSOCIATION

From letters which are being received in this office regarding the reorganization of the American Nurses' Association, which is now under consideration by the affiliated societies, we realize that the plan suggested by the Revision Committee which cuts off direct representation from the alumnae associations to the national, comes as a good deal of a shock to many societies. We are being asked to explain through the JOURNAL whether this is the intention. As we understand the plan, this is the intention. The alumnae association would first become affiliated with a county association, and through the county would become a member of the state association, which has direct representation in the national. It is the intention in this plan to elevate the state association and subordinate the county and alumnae associations to it. Such associations could become members of the national only through affiliation with the state.

We hope we have made this clear, so that the associations may send their delegates fully prepared to express their wishes. One of the latest legal developments is that delegates must not be instructed how to vote, they may be advised, however, as to the wishes of their associations.

The point which has not yet been worked out in detail is the manner of representation from the states into the national. Some plan will have to be devised by which such representation would be equally distributed among the affiliated associations and would not all be from one large, dominating nursing center.

We want to again emphasize the point that all of these proposed changes are because of our great numbers. We have become, as an association, absolutely unwieldy. If we are to go on as we are now, the detail of carrying on the work has become so tremendous that it would be necessary to pay a number of people living-wage salaries to conduct our business.

It is for the associations to decide how they want the affairs of the national association to be conducted. It is not probable that such a weighty matter can be decided with only one conference or that any definite conclusion will be reached at New Orleans. It should be borne in mind, however, that the committee that has had this matter in hand has given very careful study to the whole situation and a few people, especially the chairman, have spent practically the whole winter over it. The directors of the three national organizations have discussed the plan from all points of view at their conferences in October and January and the recommendations of the Revision Committee have been altered

again and again to meet their objections or to include their suggestions. Everyone should believe that the plans have been submitted with the interest of the whole association at heart and in absolutely good faith. The discussion at the convention should be carried on in the same spirit.

PROGRESS OF STATE REGISTRATION

We understand that there has been some agitation in New Jersey, brought about by the dissatisfaction of some of the superintendents who were unwilling to comply with the educational requirements of the Board of Examiners, but it has ended with a unanimous endorsement of the action of the board and all the schools are being brought up to the standard which it has fixed. Maryland, Massachusetts and New York all have bills before the legislature for the improvement of laws which have been in existence for some time.

CANDIDATES FOR NATIONAL OFFICE

Before this number of the JOURNAL reaches our readers, the ticket of nomination for officers of the American Nurses' Association, to be voted on at the New Orleans meeting, will have been mailed to the affiliated associations and individual members. As is our custom we give slight sketches of those whose names appear on this ticket.

Annie W. Goodrich of New York, who needs no introduction, is re-nominated for president, there being no second candidate.

For first vice-president both candidates are from Chicago. Mary C. Wheeler is well known as a graduate of the Illinois Training School. She was formerly superintendent of Blessing Hospital, Quincy, Ill.; was secretary of the first Board of Nurse Examiners of Illinois and is now superintendent of the school of her own hospital. She was at one time president of the National League of Nursing Education and has served on various committees of both that and the American Nurses' Association, being at present one of the directors of the latter.

Adda Eldredge is a graduate of St. Luke's Hospital, where she has been instructor of nurses for seven or eight years, though she is this winter studying at Teachers College. She was active in helping secure the nurse practice act in Illinois, she has been president of the Illinois State Association and has been for three years first vice-president of the American Nurses' Association.

For second vice-president, both candidates are Johns Hopkins graduates. Elsie M. Lawler is now superintendent of nurses of the Johns Hopkins School and is also president of the Maryland State Association.

Louise M. Powell, a graduate of the course at Teachers College, is superintendent of the training school for nurses connected with the University of Minnesota.

The candidate for reelection as secretary is Katharine DeWitt, a graduate of the Illinois Training School, Chicago; assistant editor of the *AMERICAN JOURNAL OF NURSING*; formerly, for many years, a private duty nurse.

For treasurer there are two candidates. Mrs. C. V. Twiss is a graduate of the New York Hospital, she served for four years as president of the New York State Association; she has served as director and on various committees of the American Nurses' Association and is now completing her sixth year as its treasurer, an office which now includes the care of the resources of the Relief Fund.

Sarah E. Sly of Birmingham, Mich., is a graduate of Harper Hospital, Detroit. She has been president of the Michigan State Association and of the American Nurses' Association, also secretary and director of the latter. She is now chairman of the Committee on Revision of By-Laws.

The four candidates for director, two to be chosen, are: Dr. Helen P. Criswell, whose one-year term is just expiring, graduate of the Children's Hospital, San Francisco and of a school of dentistry; a woman who has rendered conspicuous service in her own state as president of the state association and as one of the Arrangements Committee for last year's convention;

Minnie H. Ahrens of Chicago, graduate of the Illinois Training School, head of the Infant Welfare work, formerly superintendent of Provident Hospital, now president of the Illinois State Association;

S. Lillian Clayton, a graduate of the Philadelphia General Hospital and of the course at Teachers College, assistant superintendent for a time at the Illinois Training School, now superintendent of nurses at her own school;

Arabella R. Creech, graduate of the Elizabeth General Hospital, president of the New Jersey State Association and a member of the Board of Nurse Examiners; chairman of the Nominating Committee of the American Nurses' Association and a private duty nurse.